ON THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S WHITE BOOK CONCERNING VIET NAM-CHINA RELATIONS

by *People's Daily* and Xinhua News Agency Commentators

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS
BEIJING

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CONFESSION AND SCANDAL

— On the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's White Book Concerning Viet Nam-China Relations (I)

by *People's Daily* and Xinhua News Agency Commentators

(November 14, 1979)

The 30-year history of Sino-Vietnamese relations, as the world knows, is in the main one of friendship and co-operation. The Vietnamese authorities' overt hostility towards China and the deterioration of relations between the two countries happened against the wishes of the Chinese Government and people and in the last two years only. Though the relations have worsened as they did, still, we have refrained from abuse and have no desire to dwell too long on the past. However, Hanoi's anti-China propaganda has been increasing and escalating. On October 4, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam issued a white book entitled "Truth About Viet Nam-China Relations

over the Last 30 Years", slandering China in an all-round way by falsifying history. We have been forced to take up the challenge, tell the truth and straighten out the historical facts.

History cannot be fabricated or tampered with. It is a record of objective facts. The history of Sino-Vietnamese friendship and co-operation cannot be changed into one of enmity because the relations between China and Viet Nam have now worsened. Yet the Vietnamese authorities have taken such an historical idealist position. The Chinese people have always held that it was their internationalist obligation to support the Vietnamese people and that support was mutual. We will never regret our past support for the Vietnamese people because of Hanoi's current anti-China campaign. The support was determined by the historical conditions prevailing then.

What is in the white book? In short, it is both a confession of the Vietnamese authorities' complete betrayal of Sino-Vietnamese friendship and a scandal rarely seen in the annals of international relations.

In this 40,000-word white book, the Vietnamese authorities did their utmost to distort, tamper with and fabricate history in an effort to convert the

history between the two countries in the 30 years which was interwoven mainly with friendship and co-operation into one in which China tried to take control of Viet Nam. The white book cursed China from the time of its birth up to this day and attacked Comrades Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and present Chinese Party and government leaders by name. They tried to convince people that Chinese leaders have been trying since 1949 to annex Viet Nam and opposing it in collaboration at first with France and then with the United States. They concluded that in the periods of Vietnamese resistance against France and the United States and since the reunification of their country, "three times China betrayed Viet Nam, each time more cruelly than in the previous period".

In this way, President Ho Chi Minh's well-known statement that the Sino-Vietnamese relationship is one of "deep kindness, great brotherhood and profound friendship" and one between "both comrades and brothers", has been totally trampled underfoot by the Vietnamese authorities. The solemn statements in praise of Sino-Vietnamese friendship and co-operation which have been repeated by themselves countless times in the past have all been thrown overboard. People might still

remember that Le Duan more than once stated: "Without China's support, the Vietnamese revolution could not have developed," "without help from the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao our successes would have been impossible." On November 20, 1977, he still declared in Beijing that "the Vietnamese Communists and people are proud of having such close comrades-in-arms and brothers as the Chinese Communist Party and the people, who, as the late Premier Zhou Enlai put it, 'have always regarded doing their utmost to support the Vietnamese struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation and socialist construction as their proletarian internationalist duty' ". And now Hanoi charges in the white book that China has never been Viet Nam's comrade-in-arms and brother, but a "vile", "mean", "frantic", "wicked" "devil".

The Vietnamese authorities have so tampered with history that they described China's aid to Viet Nam to win the fight against French and U.S. aggression as China's betrayal of Viet Nam. Then, where do they place President Ho and the then Vietnamese Party Central Committee, who were policy-makers over various questions in the Sino-Vietnamese relations? Does it not mean that Presi-

dent Ho and others were accomplices and henchmen in the Chinese "betrayal"?

In the white book Le Duan and his followers claimed that they had all along resisted the non-existent "Chinese control". This proves precisely that when President Ho was adhering to the principle of friendship and co-operation with China, Le Duan and his like within the Vietnamese Party had already opposed President Ho's principle by adopting the dual tactics of complying with it in public but opposing it in private. Since 1978, they have openly abandoned this principle and launched a rabid anti-China campaign. This is but a historical development from covert sabotage of Sino-Vietnamese relations to open frantic opposition against China. This is a tragedy for the Vietnamese Party founded by President Ho and for the Vietnamese people who dearly treasure Viet Nam-China friendship.

The Vietnamese authorities' degeneration was shocking in present international relations. They have become internationally notorious for their various scandals: eating their words, playing tricks, spreading rumours and telling lies, expelling refugees and making money out of it. The wilful tampering with universally known historical facts

by the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry in its white book is nothing but a frightful scandal in contemporary international relations. This cannot but raise the vigilance of those who are dealing with it.

The white book has its own interpretation of the "stick and carrot". It describes China's substantial aid to Viet Nam as a "carrot" to please and woo Viet Nam and her failure to completely satisfy Viet Nam's excessive greed as a "stick" to coerce Viet Nam. In a word, once disagreement was voiced with the Vietnamese policy of aggression and expansion, any aid, be it colossal or not, was seen by Hanoi as a sin. This logic of Hanoi is an eye-opener for all the countries that are giving aid to Viet Nam or prepared to do so.

The way the white book tampers with and falsifies historical records is rare in international relations. Any country which has to deal with the leaders of Hanoi should be on its guard against them, because its statement today can be distorted or even larded with fabrications by them tomorrow in the form of a white book. They allege that China supported Lon Nol and "discarded Mr. Sihanouk" when Lon Nol staged a coup in 1970, distorting the well-known fact that China had extended firm support to Samdech Sihanouk. The Chinese

support was confirmed by Samdech Sihanouk in his memoirs where he said, "Premier Zhou Enlai had convoked the entire diplomatic corps, which was lined up for my arrival. 'You remain the Head of State,' he said. 'The only one. We will never recognize another.' " In fact, the awkwardness in the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's white book is self-evident. No wonder that foreign correspondents in Hanoi, when commenting on the white book, said that the Vietnamese authorities even do not know how to make rumours.

Why did the Vietnamese authorities issue this white book at this time? The answer is: the need of policies pursued by them both at home and abroad. At home, they try to deceive the Vietnamese people, blur their memory of the Sino-Vietnamese friendship, and mollify their dissatisfaction with the actual life and the policy pursued by Hanoi towards China. In the days of the war for national liberation, what many Vietnamese soldiers, cadres and civilians ate, wore and used were provided by China and the weapons in their hands were made in China. Today, China-supplied vehicles are still seen running in Viet Nam, the Chinese-aided projects are still to be found in various places north of the 17th parallel, the remains of many

Chinese martyrs are still buried there, and the friendship between the two countries can still be sensed in various aspects of Vietnamese life. All these are great obstacles to the anti-China policy followed by the Vietnamese authorities which try to defend their anti-China policy by claiming that China has never been a friend of Viet Nam but an "enemy from generation to generation".

Internationally, they try to escape from the difficult predicament resulting from their aggression in Kampuchea, occupation of Laos and expansion into the Southeast Asian nations and to divert the attention of the international community. Now, the 200,000 Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea are launching a dry-season offensive there and are posing a threat to the security of Thailand's border areas. The Vietnamese authorities have been severely condemned by world opinion. In such circumstances, the author of the white book racked his brains to sow dissension between China and other nations — particularly the Southeast Asian nations — alleging that China wants to annex Southeast Asia, and "Southeast Asia has been a traditional target for Chinese expansion throughout the centuries". The author believes that his book will make the Southeast Asian nations and the

whole world deaf to the shootings and bombardments in the Kampuchean-Thai border areas as well as the groans of the hundreds of thousands of Kampuchean people being trampled underfoot by the Vietnamese occupation troops. This is just like someone who plugs up his ears while stealing a bell.

The white book further shows that Viet Nam's attempt to achieve hegemony in Southeast Asia and its anti-China policy are two aspects of one and the same thing. The Vietnamese authorities want to lord it over Indochina and the Southeast Asian region but China disagrees. So Viet Nam has become hostile to China and consequently the conflicts between the two countries have occurred. Since the Vietnamese regional hegemonists who failed to get their needed foreign aid from China have turned to the Soviet Union for help, they have not hesitated to follow Moscow more closely in hostility to China, acting as the "Cuba of Asia" and serving the southward thrust policy of Soviet hegemonism. The Vietnamese authorities' wilful distortion of the history of Sino-Vietnamese relations and their ridiculous escalation of anti-China propaganda prove that they have met with great obstacles both at home and abroad in their path to seeking regional hegemony. The white book is

very good material for teaching people in a negative way to see the true features of the Vietnamese regional hegemonists and their degeneration in international relations. It also serves as a lesson to all who may make contact with the Vietnamese authorities.

SINO-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS DURING VIET NAM'S ANTI-FRENCH, ANTI-AMERICAN STRUGGLE

— On the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's White Book Concerning Viet Nam-China Relations (II)

by *People's Daily* and Xinhua News Agency Commentators

(November 20, 1979)

In the past three decades or so, the Chinese Government and people have given consistent support to the Vietnamese people in their struggle for liberation. During that period, the total value of China's aid to Viet Nam, military, economic or in foreign exchange, exceeded 20 billion U.S. dollars. Of all the countries which received assistance from China, Viet Nam came first in terms of range, amount and duration. The Chinese people have always maintained that in assisting the revolutionary struggle of Viet Nam, they were fulfilling their internationalist duty. Moreover, support is reciprocal.

As a consequence, China has refrained from dwelling on the aid it has given to Viet Nam.

The white book, published recently by the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry, deals with what it calls the "truth about Viet Nam-China relations over the last 30 years." It tries to reverse and distort the history of the Chinese Government and people's 30-year unstinting support for the Vietnamese people in their struggle against France and the United States and to reunify the country. It alleges without justification that China prevented the people of Viet Nam from "winning complete victory" in their war of resistance against France in the mid-50s, prevented the Vietnamese people from "stepping up the armed struggle in south Viet Nam" in the early 60s, turned on the "green light for the United States directly to invade Viet Nam" in the mid-60s and hindered the Vietnamese people from "completely liberating south Viet Nam" in the 70s. It also alleges that China "compromised and collaborated" first with the French imperialists and then with the U.S. imperialists "to restrain and undermine the Vietnamese revolution so as to subdue Viet Nam." In making these allegations, the white book slanders China as having twice "betrayed Viet Nam" during the periods of its struggle

against France and the United States.

In the face of Hanoi's slanders, we feel it necessary to review the history of Sino-Vietnamese relations during the two periods in order to give the lie to Hanoi's statements and ensure a correct understanding of the facts.

"Preventing Viet Nam from Winning Complete Victory" or Granting All-Out Support in Its War of Resistance Against France?

New China was founded 30 years ago. At that time the Vietnamese people had already been engaged for several years in resisting the aggression launched by the French colonialists. As President Ho Chi Minh said, the Vietnamese people had dealt with the enemy planes and artillery "with clubs". They had endured a massive disparity in strength. Though at that time China itself was encountering very grave difficulties as a result of imperialist blockade and the backlog of work yet to be undertaken, it fulfilled its internationalist duty to support and assist the struggle of the Vietnamese people.

In 1950, the Military Advisers' Mission dispatched to Viet Nam by China at the request of

President Ho Chi Minh helped the Vietnamese win a series of battles including the boundary battle. Between December 1953 and May 1954, the Mission helped the Vietnamese army and people to organize and carry out the world-famous Dien Bien Phu Campaign. All the arms and ammunition, communication equipment, food and medicines used and expended in this campaign were supplied by China. As a result of the leadership of the Vietnamese Party's Central Committee headed by President Ho Chi Minh and the efforts of the Vietnamese army and people as well as the great support and assistance provided by China, the Dien Bien Phu Campaign ended with a world-resounding victory. The Vietnamese authorities in the white book do not mention at all the role of China's assistance in this campaign. Nor do they mention how they had made up their mind to fight and how the campaign was won. This indicates their consciousness that justice is not on their side.

Military victory led to a political solution. The victory at Dien Bien Phu which created the conditions for a negotiated provisional peaceful solution to the Indochina problem ultimately led to the liberation of north Viet Nam. The Geneva conference on Indochina was held from May to July in 1954.

Working in close co-ordination, the delegations of those socialist countries then represented at the conference finally succeeded in having the participants at the conference reach agreement on the restoration of peace in Indochina. The participants signed the final declaration and the accords concerning the cessation of hostilities in the three Indochinese countries.

On the question of whether the Vietnamese people could possibly have liberated the entire country, given the then prevailing balance of forces, Premier Pham Van Dong said in a meeting with Chairman Mao Zedong in October 1965: the Dien Bien Phu battle could only liberate half of our homeland. This assessment tallies with the situation as it then was.

After the Geneva conference, the Vietnamese Party and leaders, on many occasions, appraised highly both the results of the conference and the close co-operation between Viet Nam and China at the conference. President Ho Chi Minh in an appeal in July 1954 stated, "At the Geneva conference, thanks to the struggle of our delegation and the assistance of the two delegations of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, we have scored a great victory: The French Gov-

ernment has recognized the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of our country, and has agreed to withdraw French armed forces from our land." A resolution, adopted at the Third Congress of the Viet Nam Workers' Party in 1960, stated: "We have won the victory of signing the Geneva agreements and restored peace in Indochina." "After the complete liberation of the north, the Vietnamese revolution has entered a new stage." In its message to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee extended sincere thanks to the Chinese side for the "full assistance" given to Viet Nam in the war of resistance and the diplomatic struggle in Geneva.

However, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's white book states that at that time "the army and people of Viet Nam were capable of liberating their entire country" and that the Chinese leaders "colluded with the French imperialists to work out a solution advantageous to China and France, but not to the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea". It continues that China's objective was to "limit Viet Nam's victory and to divide the peoples of the three Indochinese countries, in an attempt to weaken and eventually annex these countries

and turn them into a springboard for expansion in Southeast Asia". "Under Chinese pressure," it states, "Viet Nam accepted the solution." These assertions have trampled underfoot the appraisal of the Geneva conference made by the late President Ho Chi Minh and the then Vietnamese Party, and tampered wilfully with the history of the Geneva conference. For their anti-China needs, the Vietnamese authorities have even resorted to the changing at will of the history of that period, as the whole world knows it. This shows to what degree they have degenerated.

"Preventing the Vietnamese People from Stepping Up the Armed Struggle in South Viet Nam" or Fully Supporting Their Armed Struggle?

After the restoration of peace in Viet Nam in 1954, China not only provided Viet Nam with an enormous amount of aid for construction in the north but also rendered full support — in political, military, diplomatic, economic and other fields — to the just struggle of the south Vietnamese people, including their armed struggle which gradually unfurled from the late 1950s. China was the first to recognize the South Viet Nam National Libera-

tion Front when it was founded in December 1960. Six months afterwards, Pham Van Dong led a Vietnamese Party and government delegation to visit China. In meeting with him, Chairman Mao Zedong praised and expressed firm support for the armed struggle being waged by the south Vietnamese people.

In the summer of 1962, President Ho Chi Minh and Comrade Nguyen Chi Thanh came to China and requested military assistance for the people's armed forces in south Viet Nam. The Chinese Government immediately provided 90,000 weapons for the people of south Viet Nam. In the following years China provided south Viet Nam with more rifles, field guns, ammunition and other military materials as well as clothes and grain. With the escalation of the war the quantity of Chinese military aid constantly increased. All China's assistance to the people's armed forces in south Viet Nam was provided gratis. In the years of hardship when the south Vietnamese people were short of food grain as a result of the U.S. air and sea blockade, Chinese seamen aboard Chinese freighters off the shore of south Viet Nam, running the risk of losing their lives during bombardments, managed to ship grain to them. The rice, packed in

multi-layered plastic bags, was floated in on the tide to south Viet Nam. Some Chinese sailors lost their lives in these operations.

All these are established facts. The white book even claims that China "exerted pressure to force" Viet Nam to "let the U.S.-Diem clique freely repress the people of south Viet Nam", "prevented the Vietnamese people from stepping up the armed struggle in south Viet Nam", and wanted the north Vietnamese people "to leave the south Vietnamese people alone in the struggle". Such claims are sheer slanders.

"Turning On the Green Light for the United States Directly to Invade Viet Nam" or Sending Support Forces to Aid Viet Nam in Its Resistance Against U.S. Aggression?

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's white book says: "The U.S. imperialists recklessly embarked on a military venture in Viet Nam after causing the so-called 'Tonkin Gulf Incident' in August 1964. One of the main reasons for this was because the U.S. imperialists were no longer worried about the Chinese rulers' reaction." The "materials on Viet Nam-China relations" released early this year by

the Vietnamese authorities also say: "Many Chinese leaders then stated, 'We will not attack unless we are attacked,' 'China will not fight outside the Chinese border.' These statements actually provided a disguised support to the continued U.S. imperialist aggression against Viet Nam."

Historical facts brook no distortion! On August 5, 1964, the United States dispatched naval aircraft to bombard several coastal localities in north Viet Nam. On the same day, Premier Zhou Enlai and Chief of the General Staff Luo Ruiqing sent a message to President Ho Chi Minh, Premier Pham Van Dong and Chief of the General Staff Van Tien Dung, proposing "to get to the bottom of the situation and introduce counter-measures in preparation for action". On the following day, the Chinese Government issued a statement, solemnly declaring: "Aggression by the United States against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam means aggression against China. The Chinese people will absolutely not sit idly by without lending a helping hand." "The flames of a war of aggression against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam were lit by the United States. Since the United States has acted this way, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam has gained the right to fight against aggression, and all

the countries upholding the Geneva agreements have gained the right to assist the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam in its fight against aggression." That is to say, since the United States had bombed north Viet Nam, China had gained the "right of action" to assist Viet Nam. For five days running, 20 million Chinese people participated in the rallies and demonstrations throughout the country, extending support for Viet Nam in its struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation.

The United States, while sending more ground forces to south Viet Nam, again carried out bombing of north Viet Nam in early February 1965. At this crucial moment when the United States stepped up the war, Premier Zhou Enlai solemnly announced at a mass rally in Tirana: "The Chinese people resolutely respond to the recent appeal and statement made by the South Viet Nam National Liberation Front and will give the south Vietnamese people all necessary material assistance including weapons and all other war materials. We are also prepared to send our personnel to fight alongside the Vietnamese people whenever the south Vietnamese people deem it necessary."

In early April 1965, Le Duan, upon his arrival

in Beijing at the head of a Vietnamese delegation, requested that the Chinese Government dispatch support forces to Viet Nam. He said: "We would like to have some volunteer pilots, volunteer fighters . . . as well as other necessary personnel, including those personnel specializing in roads, bridges and other subjects." Agreements were thus signed between the Governments of China and Viet Nam in line with the above-mentioned Vietnamese request. From January 1965 to March 1968, China dispatched to Viet Nam support forces of over 320,000 men to undertake air defence, engineering, railway and logistics work. In a peak year, China's support forces totalled more than 170,000. Together with the Vietnamese people, the Chinese support forces defended the territorial air space of north Viet Nam with their lives. They ensured a smooth and unimpeded flow of traffic on the transportation lines in north Viet Nam and enabled the Vietnamese People's Army to send large numbers of troops to south Viet Nam for combat. By July 1970 all the Chinese support forces had pulled back to China after fulfilling their internationalist mission. The remains of thousands of Chinese martyrs lie on Vietnamese soil to this day.

On April 13, 1966, Le Duan, in the presence of

Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping, paid tribute to the feats of the Chinese support forces in Viet Nam. He said, "We have always thought that China is most close to us. China is providing us with the greatest and most effective support," and "if you did not give us such active support, we would only be able to win victory by sacrificing an additional two or three million people."

China's stand in supporting Viet Nam's resistance against the United States is known to the world. China's dispatch of troops to Viet Nam is no secret. The Vietnamese authorities' attempt to tamper with history can only show their stupidity.

"Hindering the Vietnamese People from Completely Liberating South Viet Nam" or Fully Supporting the Reunification of North and South Viet Nam?

The white book has spread the lie that Chinese leaders in 1968 threatened to reduce or even stop aid to Viet Nam and suspend relations between the two Parties and two countries in order to encourage the United States to "intensify its bombing of north

Viet Nam" so as to "weaken Viet Nam". The white book also alleges that Chinese leaders "stopped all military aid (to Viet Nam)" after the conclusion of the Paris agreement on Viet Nam in 1973. It states, "They made every effort to hinder the Vietnamese people's struggle to thwart the scheme of the United States and the Thieu administration to sabotage the Paris agreement, and to liberate south Viet Nam entirely and reunify the country," etc.

What are the facts?

Take the year 1968 as example, since the Vietnamese authorities talk a lot about it. While exchanging ideas with President Ho Chi Minh on the war situation in Viet Nam that year, Chairman Mao Zedong recommended that Viet Nam organize large-formation and annihilation warfare in south Viet Nam. President Ho Chi Minh accepted the suggestion and communicated it to the interior of Viet Nam. In that year the Chinese Government signed and executed ten agreements on its aid given gratis to Viet Nam. In the four years from 1969 to 1972, the Chinese Government signed and executed over 30 agreements on its economic and military aid given gratis to Viet Nam. It is nothing but sheer fabrication when the Vietnamese authorities claim that China "threatened to stop its aid"

to Viet Nam and drastically "reduced its aid" in 1969 and 1970.

In 1967 and 1968, President Ho Chi Minh stayed long in China for medical treatment. The Chinese Government sent its best doctors to cure President Ho of his illness. During the same period, with a view to closely co-ordinating the military struggle with the Viet Nam-U.S. negotiations, the Vietnamese authorities often wanted to recall military commanders from south Viet Nam to Hanoi or send some responsible members from Hanoi to the south. When it received requests from the Vietnamese side, China sent special planes for Viet Nam's responsible members going from Hanoi to south Viet Nam, or from south Viet Nam to Hanoi, via China. They included Pham Hung, Le Duc Tho, Vo Chi Cong and Nguyen Van Linh. Many sorties were flown within a year. Vietnamese Vice-Premier Le Thanh Nghi was warmly received when he visited China in 1968 to hold talks on China's aid to Viet Nam. How can these facts be made to show that China wanted to "suspend relations between the two Parties and two countries"?

After the signing of the Paris agreement in January 1973, whenever the Vietnamese leaders visited China or stopped over in China, they ex-

changed views with China's leading members on the strategic principles to be followed after the signing of the agreement. Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai explicitly pledged that China would continue to grant aid to Viet Nam since they realized that the final solution to the problem depended on armed struggle. For Nguyen Van Thieu would still have troops in their hundreds of thousands even when the United States had withdrawn its troops from south Viet Nam. In accordance with this principle, China granted Viet Nam thousands of millions of yuan (RMB) in aid even though the scale of war was reduced after the signing of the Paris agreement. The Vietnamese authorities can in no way write off the fact that China had vigorously supported the Vietnamese people in their struggle to topple the Thieu administration and reunify their country.

Economizing on food and clothing, the Chinese Government and people spared themselves no sacrifice to carry out their promise to help Viet Nam. The late Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai went to any length to support Viet Nam. For many years, the Vietnamese leaders time and again expressed thanks to the Chinese leaders for this. In 1975, when the whole of Viet Nam was liberated,

Le Duan said, "Obviously, Viet Nam could not exist today without China which has won the revolution. This is the logic of history." On November 22, 1977, Le Duan told Chairman Hua Guofeng in Beijing, "Now, I can assure Comrade Hua Guofeng that Viet Nam has always regarded China as its good friend. We are your younger brothers, constantly standing on your side and we would not do otherwise. When Soviet revisionists were opposing China, we were in the same boat, and we, too, opposed what they were doing."

While these words remain still fresh in our minds, the Vietnamese leaders have gone so far as to repudiate all that they have said and now even consider China as a sworn enemy from generation to generation in contravention of what President Ho Chi Minh had said about the Sino-Vietnamese relations. He described them as being characterized by "deep kindness, great brotherhood and profound friendship" of "both comrades and brothers". All this proves that it is none other than the Vietnamese authorities that have betrayed Sino-Vietnamese friendship, the Vietnamese and Chinese peoples and Marxism-Leninism.

WHY HAVE SINO-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS WORSENED AFTER VIET NAM'S REUNIFICATION?

— On the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's White Book Concerning Viet Nam-China Relations (III)

by *People's Daily* and Xinhua News Agency Commentators

(November 26, 1979)

In its white book on the so-called truth about Viet Nam-China relations over the last 30 years, the Vietnamese authorities presented the history of steady escalation of their anti-China policy since the reunification of Viet Nam as one of China "betraying Viet Nam for the third time" in 1975 and afterwards. They attributed the worsening of Sino-Vietnamese relations in recent years to the alleged fact that China "begrudged" Viet Nam's reunification, "did not support the Vietnamese people in the reconstruction of their country in the new stage", "sought in every way possible" to

"deliberately sabotage the friendship" between the two countries and engaged in "big-power hegemonism".

Is what they said true?

We would like to ask: Have the Chinese people done anything wrong in that they let the Vietnamese people down before or after the reunification of their land?

Hanoi's white book alleges that ever since 1975, China had "rejected Viet Nam's requests for further aid". But the truth is that despite the fact that China, which had shouldered the onerous burden of aiding Viet Nam, really needed a respite after the end of Viet Nam's war of resistance against U.S. aggression in 1975 and that it itself was plunged into dire economic straits by Lin Biao and the Gang of Four, it still did its best to keep four or five dozen aid projects under construction in Viet Nam each year. They included not only projects belonging to heavy, light and textile industries and transport and communication and also hospitals, but also plants for overhauling torpedo boats, manufacturing heavy and light machineguns and 12.7 mm anti-aircraft machineguns as well as those of expanding existing rifle and ammunition plants.

This is convincing proof that after Viet Nam's

reunification, the Chinese people, who regard the Vietnamese people as their comrades and brothers, continued, as before, to render disinterested aid to Viet Nam. They hoped that the Vietnamese people would recover from the wounds of protracted war, build a happy life and advance towards prosperity. Is it conceivable that all this economic and military assistance provided by the Chinese people was intended to "weaken" and "conquer" Viet Nam and "deliberately sabotage the friendship" between the two countries?

The drastic worsening of Sino-Vietnamese relations after Viet Nam's reunification is the result not of China's "hostile policy" towards the reunified Viet Nam as is alleged by the Vietnamese authorities, but of their own hostile policy towards China owing to their regional hegemonist ambitions.

After the reunification, Hanoi paid no heed to its people's pressing desire for the rehabilitation of the country devastated by 30 long years of war. Instead, it embarked on a course of aggression and expansion, trying to rig up an "Indochinese federation", dip its finger in the Gulf of Siam and dominate Southeast Asia. It has blustered that "the emergence of a strong state of Viet Nam will surely open a new chapter in history and contribute to a

radical change in the political situation in the Southeast Asian region. This region has for a long time remained in the rear and a target in the scramble of the imperialist forces."

Kampuchea and Laos, Viet Nam's two neighbours, became the first victims of the Vietnamese authorities' aggression and expansion. In June 1975, the Vietnamese authorities went back on their pledge repeatedly stated in the sixties that they would recognize the existing Kampuchean-Vietnamese boundary. Their naval and ground forces occupied Kampuchea's Way Island. This marked the beginning of frequent Vietnamese incursions into Kampuchean territory facing the Gulf of Siam. From that year up to 1978, Hanoi had been engaged itself in infiltration and subversion in Kampuchea in an attempt to overthrow the Government of Democratic Kampuchea.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Vietnamese troops and large numbers of officials, advisers and secret agents were sent to Laos in the name of "special relationship" to exercise tight control of all central departments of the Lao Party, government and army as well as those in the localities. By ruthlessly purging and hounding patriotic Lao officials and suppressing the people, Hanoi has

managed to place that country under its domination.

Some of the Chinese territory has become a target for Vietnamese aggression. In April 1975, Hanoi seized the opportunity presented by the liberation of south Viet Nam to send its troops to occupy six islands in China's Nansha island group. It thus turned about-face from its previous position that the Xisha and Nansha island groups were part of China, and instead began declaiming to the world that these island groups belong to Viet Nam. Trying to nibble away Chinese territory, the Vietnamese authorities have by various means created disputes over Sino-Vietnamese border areas. They took actions to "purify the border areas" in the provinces contiguous to China, systematically drove away local inhabitants whose forefathers had lived there for generations. The Chinese side on its part exercised forbearance and self-restraint for the sake of preserving the friendship between the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples and the amiable relations between the two countries. However, the Vietnamese authorities took the Chinese goodwill as a manifestation of weakness and believed that China could be bullied. So instead of restraining themselves in any way,

they intensified their anti-China activities.

A crucial factor contributing to the drastic deterioration of Sino-Vietnamese relations is the fact that at the time when the Vietnamese authorities stepped up an armed aggression for the annexation of Kampuchea, China sided with the Kampuchean people instead of the Vietnamese authorities — a fact which sent those in Hanoi into a rage. Since September 1977, Hanoi has repeatedly sent large numbers of troops to invade Kampuchea and finally mobilized more than 100,000 troops to overrun Kampuchea's capital Phnom Penh as well as vast tracts of its land. It is only natural for China, a socialist country, to extend sympathy for and support to the Kampuchean people's struggle against Vietnamese aggression. That is why the Vietnamese authorities harbour a burning hatred for China and consider it the main obstacle in the way of their aggression and expansion abroad. This, in turn, has prompted them to take even wilder anti-China measures. Beginning from April 1978, a large-scale campaign against China and Chinese nationals was started by Hanoi. To date, well over 200,000 refugees including many Chinese residents in Viet Nam have been driven into China. In the Sino-Vietnamese border areas, the Vietnamese authori-

ties have deliberately provoked disputes and made troubles, nibbled away pieces of Chinese territory, and wounded or killed Chinese frontier guards and inhabitants. All this seriously threatens peace and security in China's border areas.

It was only after Viet Nam's unscrupulous and unrestrained anti-China activities had made it impossible for China to continue its aid projects in Viet Nam, that China was compelled to stop its economic and technical assistance and called the Chinese engineering personnel back from Viet Nam in the middle of 1978.

By February 1979, the Vietnamese authorities' armed intrusions into Chinese border areas had taxed China's forbearance to the limit and forced the Chinese frontier guards to undertake a necessary while at the same time limited counter-attack in self-defence. Now Hanoi claims that the actions China was compelled to take in response to the Vietnamese challenge were the cause of the deterioration in Sino-Vietnamese relations. This is a despicable reversal of cause and effect. In their counter-attack in self-defence, the Chinese people came to know that shortly after the conclusion of the war against U.S. aggression, the Vietnamese authorities had begun making preparations for

war against China. They had built fortifications with Chinese aid materials and stored the large quantities of weapons, ammunition and grain supplied by China on the Vietnamese side of the Sino-Vietnamese frontier. Under such circumstances, is it not justified for China to stop its aid to Viet Nam?

Events that took place in Indochina and in Sino-Vietnamese relations after Viet Nam's reunification bear witness to who is really seeking expansion and hegemony, who entertains the "design to conquer" the whole of Indochina, who is working unceasingly for "a drive into Southeast Asia" and who has fanatically carried out a systematic policy of hostility. It is clearly the Vietnamese authorities and not China. It is easy to see that the policy for regional hegemony pursued by Hanoi at the instigation of the Soviet Union is the root cause of the hostilities in Indochina, the unrest in Southeast Asia and the deterioration in Sino-Vietnamese relations during the past few years. The more truculent the Vietnamese authorities become with their ambitions for regional hegemony, the more they see China as the obstacle in their quest for hegemony and the more furiously they escalate their anti-China campaign and the worse

the Sino-Vietnamese relations will be. This is the logic which explains the deterioration in Sino-Vietnamese relations; it is the most important fact which the Vietnamese authorities have tried hard to cover up in their white book.

The policy of seeking regional hegemony pursued by the Vietnamese authorities after the reunification of the country has plunged themselves into dire straits at home and abroad, and things will get tougher for them as time goes on. In the circumstances, they become more and more obsessed with this anti-China mania. As their people become increasingly dissatisfied with the policy of enlarged aggression pursued by the Vietnamese authorities in disregard of the people's vital interests, Hanoi tries to pacify this popular discontent by intensifying the anti-China campaign. In the heat of worldwide condemnation of their massive military action in the Kampuchean-Thai border areas, they hope to divert the attention of the world public from this military action with louder anti-China propaganda. They need energetic Soviet support for their aggressive ventures and anti-China activities become their means of soliciting this support. Of course, all these points are not mentioned in the white book.

In mounting aggression and expansion and pursuing hegemony after the reunification of their country, the Vietnamese authorities have counted on the support of the Soviet superpower hegemonists. The Soviet Union, seeking global hegemony, has regarded Viet Nam as a cat's paw in its drive into Southeast Asia. Hanoi, on its part, considers the Soviet Union as its backer in its own quest for hegemony in Southeast Asia. Ganging up with and using each other, these two countries have endangered the peace, security and stability of the region. In face of this obvious fact, it is futile for the Vietnamese authorities to attempt to vilify China by claiming in the white book that China is practising "big-nation hegemonism". It is equally futile for them to attempt to hoodwink people and make use of the so-called Sino-Vietnamese relations issue to gloss over their own and the Soviet Union's aggression and expansion in Indochina and Southeast Asia.

By transforming socialist Viet Nam, a country which has itself been victims of aggression, into a country practising hegemonism and aggression against others, the Vietnamese authorities have defamed the country, forfeited the universal sympathy it had enjoyed and isolated it from most of

the world. It is indeed betrayal pure and simple that they should go against the tide of history and forfeit the fruits of victory gained by the people after dozens of years of struggle. And it is also betrayal pure and simple that they should treat as number one enemy their brothers and comrades-in-arms who had gone through thick and thin and fought shoulder to shoulder with them for dozens of years.

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has packed its long-winded white book with wilful fabrications, distortions and falsifications of universally known historical facts. This compels us to make this necessary reply. While its lies are not worth refuting one by one, the white book remains a record of shocking political degeneration in modern international relations. It came as a surprise but will be quickly forgotten.

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